(b) There is no uncovered area in MTNL, however, WLL systems have also been inducted into the network of MTNL Delhi and Mumbai Units.

(c) and (d) Do not pertain to MTNL.

Security deposits

217. PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) the amount of money collected by his Ministry during the past three years ending October 31, 2003, by way of security deposits from the subscirbers at the time of obtaining the facility; and

(b) the amount refunded during the said period on closing the connections by the subscribers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN) : (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Fall in profits of BSNL

†218. SHRI MOTILAL VORA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been a fall of around 75 per cent in the profit of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. during the year 2002-03 as compared to the year 2001-02;

(b) the details of the profits made by BSNL from April, 2003 till date during the current period and to what extent this profit is less in comparison to the same period of last year;

(c) the reasons for continuous fall in the profit of BSNL and measures adopted by it to check this trend; and

(d) by when the results would be achieved regarding the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) The un-audited figures for the half year ending 30-9-2003 shows an approximate profit of more than Rs. 2000 crores which is an improvement.

(c) and (d) In view of (b) above there is improvement in profit during the current year. However the fall in profit in 2002-03 was occasioned by very high provisioning in salary expenses for absorption of Group 'B' officers and creation of other salary and leave related liabilities. Such provisioning along with deferred tax liability become mandatory as per Accounting Standards. Additional depreciation has also been impacting profit. It may be pointed out that due to fast decline in Tariff an increase in costs, it is difficult to achieve the same level of profit of Rs. 6312 crores attained in the year 2001-02.

Uniform Licence Scheme

219. SHRI N.R. DASARI:
SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to adopt uniform licensing schemes to bring all the licence holders under one regime; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken to implement the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Sir, *inter-alia*, based on the recommendations of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), an addendum to New Telecom Policy-1999 (NTP-1999) has been issued in November, 2003, to provide for the following categories of licences for Telecommunication services:

(i) Unified Licence for Telecommunication Services permiting Licensee to provide all Telecommunication/Telegraph services covering various geographical areas using any technology.

(ii) Licence for Unified Access (Basic and Cellular) Services permitting Licensee to provide Basic and/or Cellular Services using any technology in a defined service area.